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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/995,352	11/27/2001	Stanley W. Driggs	LM(F)5791	9014

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EXAMINER

LAROSE, COLIN M

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

2623

DATE MAILED: 06/30/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/995,352

Applicant(s)

DRIGGS ET AL.

Examiner

Colin M. LaRose

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 01 March 2005.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1,2 and 4-23 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☒ Claim(s) 21-23 is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1,2,5,7,10-12,15,17 and 20 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 4,6,8,9,13,14,16,18 and 19 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Arguments and Amendments

1. Applicant's amendments and arguments filed 1 March 2005, have been entered and made of record.

Response to Amendments and Arguments

2. Applicant's arguments regarding independent claims 1 and 11 have been considered but are not persuasive for the following reasons. In the Examiner's opinion, a reasonable interpretation of the Mozer patent provides full anticipation of claims 1 and 11. On pp. 8-9 of Applicant's Remarks, Applicant asserts that Mozer does not disclose "generating, via a second classification technique, a confidence value..." as claimed. In particular, Applicant maintains that Mozer's interpretation process does not determine additional probability values, and there is "no use of a second classification technique to generate a new confidence value for the threshold comparison."

The Examiner respectfully disagrees. In column 16, line 59 through column 17, line 11, Mozer describes a method for "improving performance by rejecting low confidence responses." In one embodiment, the word class with the highest probability is identified as the associated class of the input pattern. In another embodiment, which is relied upon here, Mozer treats the class probability (i.e. the previously calculated a posteriori probability) as a confidence level and compares the confidence level to a threshold. As such, Mozer essentially generates a new, binary confidence value of "sufficiently confident" or "insufficiently confident," based on the previously calculated a posteriori probability, which is a value between zero and one. Therefore,

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the thresholding of the a posteriori probability can be considered a "classification technique" that generates a new confidence value reflective of the a posteriori probability.

After the a posteriori probability is compared to a threshold to determine the new confidence value, the selected class is either rejected or maintained based on the new confidence value.

Claim Objections

3. Claim 4 is objected to because of the following informalities: Claim 4 improperly depends from claim 3, which has been cancelled. Appropriate correction is required. For examination purposes, claim 4 is presumed to depend from claim 1.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

4. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

5. Claims 1, 2, 10-12, and 20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent 5,790,754 to Mozer et al. (hereinafter "Mozer").

Regarding claim 1, Mozer discloses a method of classifying an input pattern into an associated class, comprising:

extracting data pertaining to preselected features present within the input pattern (column 8, lines 10-67);

determining, via a first classification technique, a discriminant value for each of a plurality of classes reflecting the relative likelihood that a class is the associated class; selecting a class with the highest relative likelihood (column 2, lines 36-44; column 9, lines 54-67; the disclosed probability is interpreted as a likelihood);

generating, via a second classification technique, a confidence value reflective of the a posteriori probability that the selected class is the associated class (column 16, lines 63-64; column 17, lines 1-3; the described "interpretation" is essentially a second classification technique, wherein the class probability is the a posteriori probability, which is reflected by the confidence value); and

rejecting the selected class if the determined confidence value is below a predetermined threshold value (column 17, lines 2-3).

As to claim 2, Mozer discloses a method as set forth in claim 1 wherein the first classification technique uses a modified Bayesian distance function to compute the discriminant values (column 2, line 37; the altered Bayes classifier is a modified Bayes distance function).

As to claim 10, Mozer discloses a method as set forth in claim 1 wherein the input pattern is an audio recording (abstract).

With regard to claims 11, 12, and 20, the discussions provided above for claims 1, 2 and 10 are applicable. The computer program product with associated portions is inherent in the computer/microprocessor-based system (Fig. 1; column 12, line 6).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

6. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

7. This application currently names joint inventors. In considering patentability of the claims under 35 U.S.C. 103(a), the examiner presumes that the subject matter of the various claims was commonly owned at the time any inventions covered therein were made absent any evidence to the contrary. Applicant is advised of the obligation under 37 CFR 1.56 to point out the inventor and invention dates of each claim that was not commonly owned at the time a later invention was made in order for the examiner to consider the applicability of 35 U.S.C. 103(c) and potential 35 U.S.C. 102(e), (f) or (g) prior art under 35 U.S.C. 103(a).

8. Claims 1-2, 5, 7, 11-12, 15 and 17 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over the combination of U.S. Patent 5,835,633 to Fujisaki et al. (hereinafter "Fujisaki") and Mozer.

Regarding claim 1, Fujisaki discloses a method of classifying an input pattern into an associated class, comprising:

extracting data pertaining to preselected features present within the input pattern (column 4, lines 44-50);

determining, via a first classification technique, a discriminant value for each of a plurality of classes reflecting the relative likelihood that a class is the associated class;

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selecting a class with the highest relative likelihood (column 4, line 63 to column 5, lines 30; column 3, lines 42-44).

Fujisaki also discloses a second classification technique (column 5, lines 11-21; the classes here are not the same as with the first classification technique) and generating confidence values (column 7, line 27), but does not disclose the claimed generating and rejecting steps. However, these are well known in the art of pattern recognition, as evidenced by Mozer. Mozer discloses:

generating, via a second classification technique, a confidence value reflective of the a posteriori probability that a selected class is the associated class (column 16, lines 63-64; column 17, lines 1-3; the described "interpretation" is essentially a second classification technique, wherein the class probability is the a posteriori probability, which is reflected by the confidence value); and

rejecting the selected class if the determined confidence value is below a predetermined threshold value (column 17, lines 2-3).

While Mozer deals with audio processing, once the features are inputted into the neural network, the neural network is performing pattern recognition, which is applicable to any type of pattern. Mozer indicates that the technique improves performance (column 16, lines 61-62). It therefore would have been obvious to one of ordinary in the art to modify Fujiaski's invention according to Mozer.

As to claim 2, Fujisaki discloses a method as set forth in claim 1 wherein the first classification technique uses a modified Bayesian distance function to compute the discriminant values (use of a Bayesian classifier is suggested at column 6, lines 47-49).

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Regarding claim 5, Fujisaki discloses a method as set forth in claim 1 wherein the input pattern is a scanned image (column 4, lines 37-38).

As to claim 7, Fujisaki discloses a method as set forth in claim 5 wherein each of the plurality of output classes represent an alphanumeric character (column 3, lines 8-17).

With regard to claims 11, 12, 15 and 17, the discussions provided above for claims 1, 2, 5 and 7 are applicable. The computer program product with associated portions is inherent in the computer (column 10, lines 45-56).

Allowable Subject Matter

9. Claims 21-23 are allowed for the following reasons: new claim 21 is the same as previously objected to claim 3 written in independent form. Claims 22 and 23 are dependent on claim 21 and are therefore allowed.

10. Claims 4, 6, 8-9, 13-14, 16, and 18-19 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

References Cited

11. U.S. Patent 6,823,323 by Forman et al. discloses a classification system that utilizes a “ballpark” classifier to generate a subset of likely classes, and then utilizes a “scrutiny” classifier to generate the set of most likely class(es) from the subset of likely classes.

Conclusion

12. Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire **THREE MONTHS** from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within **TWO MONTHS** of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the **THREE-MONTH** shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than **SIX MONTHS** from the date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Colin M. LaRose whose telephone number is (571) 272-7423. If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Amelia Au, can be reached on (571) 272-7414. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is (703) 872-9306. (After July 15, 2005, the fax number will be changed to (571)-273-8300.) Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the TC 2600 Customer Service Office whose telephone number is (571) 272-2600.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications

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may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

CML

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22 June 2005



VIKKRAM BALI
PRIMARY EXAMINER